

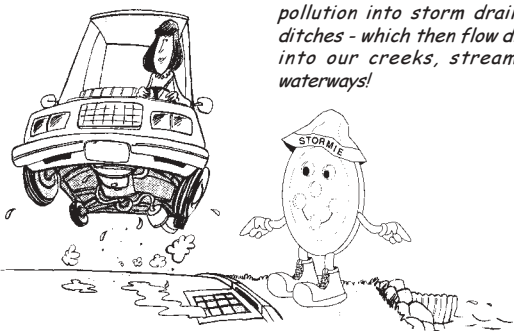
Have you ever seen an oily sheen on pavement after a rain? Mounds of foam in a creek?

It is a known fact that cars cause air pollution. But you may be unaware that cars also cause water pollution. While driving, our automobiles leave bits of tires, brakes, and rusty metal on the street. When parked, our vehicles leave stains of oil, grease and transmission fluid on driveways and parking lots. When we wash our cars on pavement, soap and dirt washes into streets and storm drains.

What happens to all this "auto pollution" when it rains? Rainwater washes these pollutants into storm drains and drainage ditches. This water, called **storm water runoff**, *does not* go to a treatment plant. In Wilmington, storm water runoff empties directly into the Cape Fear River or the Intracoastal Waterway.

Fortunately, by following the simple steps listed inside, you can help reduce pollution that comes from our cars, streets, driveways and parking lots.

Storm water runoff washes auto pollution into storm drains and ditches - which then flow directly into our creeks, streams and waterways!



CITY OF WILMINGTON
Storm Water Services
P.O. Box 1810
305 Chestnut Street
Wilmington, NC 28402
(910) 343-4777

TIPS FOR CLEAN CARS & CLEAN WATER



Did you know that
your car could be
a source of water
pollution?

Car Washing

Phosphates in car washing soap contribute to algae blooms in water which in turn can kill fish and other aquatic life. If you wash your car at home, wash it on the grass and let the dirt and soapy water soak into the soil instead of washing into a storm drain. The soil will filter out most of the pollutants & the soapy water will not harm your lawn. Taking your car to a commercial car wash is also a good alternative to protecting water quality in Wilmington. Dirty water from a commercial car wash goes to a wastewater treatment plant where pollutants are removed.



Keep Your Car Tuned-Up

Cars that run smoothly burn less fuel and cause less pollution. A tuned-up car saves you money by using up to 20% less gasoline. Regular tune-ups also reduce the amount of pollutants that come out of your car's exhaust pipe. This helps keep pollutants out of our waterways.

Repair Leaks

Spots on your driveway mean the engine, transmission, or radiator in your car is leaking. Have the leak repaired right away!

Spills

Clean up vehicle leaks and fluid spills by using kitty litter to soak up the spill. Sweep up the kitty litter, put it in a bag, seal it, & place in the trash. Do not scrub the spot or sweep the kitty litter into the street.

Check Tire Pressure

One of the simplest and cheapest ways to prevent pollution is to keep your tires inflated. For every pound that your tires are under-inflated, your car loses 1% in gas mileage. Under-inflated tires also wear out sooner. Check your tire pressure frequently, especially as temperature changes in the fall and spring. Properly inflated tires reduce the amount of gasoline your car burns and therefore reduce the amount of polluted exhaust your car makes.

Recycle Used Motor Oil

Recycling is the only safe way to dispose of used motor oil. Put oil in a container with a tight lid and take it to a local auto parts store or the County landfill (341-4340). Don't pour anything else in with the oil because contaminated oil cannot be recycled. Oil poured down storm drains ends up in our waterways.



Never pour motor oil or antifreeze into a storm drain or drainage ditch. Doing so causes water pollution!



Recycle Antifreeze

Antifreeze is poisonous to people and animals. Because of its sweet taste and smell, antifreeze may attract children, pets and other animals. Drinking only 3 ounces will kill an adult and even less will kill children and pets. In Wilmington, antifreeze can be recycled at the County landfill during regular business hours.

Return Used Batteries

Batteries contain hazardous chemicals that can leach through soil and contaminate water. Return used car batteries to an auto parts store. Do not throw old batteries in the trash or bury them—you'll be breaking the law.

Drive Less

Driving less is the best way to prevent pollution. Water quality research shows that most polluted runoff comes from heavily traveled streets and highways. This runoff often contains enough zinc, copper and lead to kill fish and other aquatic life.